

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Enterprise Planning and Infrastructure Committee
DATE	31 January 2012
DIRECTOR	Gordon McIntosh
TITLE OF REPORT	Delivering Scotland's Cities Strategy
REPORT NUMBER:	EPI 12/055

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

This report outlines Scotland's Cities Strategy, 'Scotland Cities Delivering for Scotland' (The Cities Strategy), considers the proposed delivery of this strategy and requests contributing to three years of a joint shared costs towards the strategy's delivery.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Committee -

- a. Notes this paper, and
- b. Approves an annual contribution of £15,000 towards the delivery of the strategy for the next three financial years.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Scottish Government has confirmed a new £5 million fund aimed at promoting economic growth in Scotland's six cities as part of the new Cities Strategy. The funds will be applied to collaborative programmes to deliver outcomes which are consistent to the Cities Strategy's four themes:-The Connected City (Digital, roads, air, sea); The Sustainable City (renewables);The Knowledge City and The Vibrant and Cultural City. The government's priority is to see funding for collaborative programmes that get things done. Access to the £5 million is time limited and will be allocated by the Cities Alliance Leadership Group (which will be further described in section 5.2.) There will be no bidding into the fund. The fund will comply with State Aid requirements. An annual contribution of £15,000 for three years is required from the three larger cities (Aberdeen, Edinburgh and Glasgow) and £10,000 per annum for three years from the smaller cities (Dundee, Inverness, Stirling) with the remainder from Scottish government to fund the delivery of this strategy. The details of which are further explained in section 5.4 of this report. Officer can confirm that this money can be found from within existing EP&I budgets.

4 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Cities Strategy recognised the contribution of cities and their regions to enabling the Scottish Government's Economic Strategy. The Cities Strategy is consistent with current Council policy and priorities. The Cities Strategy supports the priorities within Aberdeen City's Single Outcome Agreement, in particular, the potential to: anchor the oil and gas industry in Aberdeen; Diversify Aberdeen's economy; ensure high quality business locations and support the attraction and the retention of skilled workers.
- 4.2 Similarly, the fund also supports the Vibrant Dynamic and Forward Looking initiative, in particular by promoting Aberdeen as an Energy Capital, addressing the skills shortage in the city, ensuring a sustainable economy and advancing Aberdeen City Council's (ACC) target of being carbon neutral overall by 2020.
- 4.3 The Cities Strategy is consistent to Aberdeen City and Shire's Economic Future's (ACSEF) Economic Manifesto - Building on Energy.

5 MAIN ISSUES

- 5.1 Scotland's Cities Strategy, 'Scotland Cities Delivering for Scotland' (The Cities Strategy) a copy of which is attached, was developed by Scottish Government and Scotland's six cities; Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Inverness and Stirling. This Cities Strategy takes into account the vital contribution that Scotland's major population centres and regions can make in delivering the aspirations of the Government Economic Strategy. It focuses on growth and opportunity - concentrating on developing and promoting the key assets of the cities and their regions so as to attract inward investment create jobs and stimulate economic activity.
- 5.2 The Cities Strategy was launched in Edinburgh on 16 December 2011. It has a governance structure which consists of the Cities Alliance Leadership Group whose members are the Council leaders of each City Council. The Cities Delivery Group consists of officers from each city. Coinciding with this launch is the Scottish Knowledge Centre which is funded and resourced by both Glasgow University and Saint Andrew's University. The Scottish Knowledge Centre aims to act as an expert advisory resource to the Cities Alliance providing robust academic research and development that will advance the Cities Strategy's four themes.
- 5.3 The Scottish Government announced the establishment of a £5 million investment fund to accelerate investment in Scottish cities. The funds could be used to develop programmes which leverage in other funding - either private finance or European funding, support collaborative programmes between cities which will develop large-scale projects, or

develop programmes which allow for wider city region investment. The criteria are currently being developed to be approved by the Cities Alliance leadership group.

- 5.4 In order to ensure that the cities are able to deliver the Cities Strategy, the cities are part of the Cities Alliance, facilitated by the Scottish Council for Development and Industry (SCDI). The Cities Alliance is tasked with developing growth initiatives focused on connectivity, sustainability, knowledge and culture, and will draw on the expertise of the public, private and academic sectors.
- 5.5 SCDI for the next 3 years will host and manage the resources required to support the Alliance so it can deliver the Cities Strategy in a co-ordinated way. A budget of £150,000 of per annum has been agreed in principle for the next three years with Aberdeen's annual share being £15,000. This annual budget will fund two posts and the resources required to support and advance the Strategy and Cities Alliance. One post will be an experienced specialist coordinator and the other being a graduate. Members of the City alliance will work in collaboration with SCDI to develop the posts. Contributing to this annual joint budget has been agreed in principle by the Six Cities and the Scottish Government subject to each party gaining the necessary approvals.

6 IMPACT

An Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment is not required for this report.

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

'Scotland Cities Delivering for Scotland' 2011

8 REPORT AUTHOR DETAILS

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